



2006 Census: Everyone Counts

The Census of Population and Housing will be held on 8 August this year and to provide the best possible snapshot of our population, it needs to count everyone in Australia. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ethnic communities, the homeless and people who might have difficulty in filling out the Census form due to a disability.

As well as counting the population, the Census helps us to define who we are as Australians, capturing the diversity of our nation.

Census information is used for a range of planning purposes by all levels of government, private institutions and the community. It is used to determine such things as where schools and hospitals will be built. The Census therefore gives everyone a chance to make themselves, and their communities, count.

To make sure that the Census collects the most accurate count, strategies have been formulated to maximise the effectiveness of collecting information from groups such as those mentioned above. Here's a summary of the tailored strategies for each of these groups.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The Ethnic Enumeration Strategy is aimed at gaining support for, and encouraging participation in, the Census from the many community groups and nationalities that exist throughout Australia. In particular, the strategy focuses on groups that have been identified as likely to be missed or undercounted such as recent immigrants.

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER

PEOPLES

The Indigenous Enumeration Strategy is a collection of procedures which address potential barriers, caused by cultural factors, to the effective enumeration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The strategy also encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be aware of, and participate in, the Census.

The strategy covers the enumeration of both nominated discrete Indigenous communities and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households.

THE HOMELESS

The Homeless Enumeration Strategy recognises and addresses social and cultural barriers to the effective enumeration of homeless people. It also aims at encouraging homeless people to be aware of, and participate in, the Census.

The strategy provides a range of tactics and suggestions encompassing the enumeration of:

- homeless people without a conventional "roof" over their heads, such as people sleeping on the streets, under bridges, in parks, squatting or in improvised dwellings; and
- homeless people staying temporarily in public or private dwellings, such as boarding houses, hostels, crisis accommodation or in the homes of friends or relatives.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The ABS encourages people with disabilities who might have difficulty in filling out their forms to enlist the help of others they trust, such as family members, friends, carers or neighbours.

In some cases, disabled people may need the help of a Census Collector who is required by law to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all citizens and to treat all people with sensitivity and respect.

Organisations for people with disabilities, and carers' groups, are also encouraged to help wherever possible.

Special Collectors using standard Census forms have been recruited to assist people in hospitals, nursing homes, retirement villages and hostels in completing their Census forms.

Whoever fills in the form can sign, so if someone fills it out on behalf of another person they also can sign the form on their behalf, provided that the person agrees and understands that in doing so the information remains confidential.

People with a hearing impairment can obtain assistance through the telephone typewriter service (TTY) number **1300 364 365**.

A large print version of the Census Guide is available from the ABS web site.

In designing the eCensus form, the ABS consulted organisations such as Vision Australia, the National Information Library Service and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, in an effort to ensure that the broadest range of people would be able to access the eCensus form from their home computers. Text can be resized and the eCensus form is compatible with programs such as Jaws© and Window Eyes©.

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